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Communities in ACTION

A bimonthly magazine about the War on Poverty

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Who builds for the poor?

Communities in ACTION

December 1968/Vol. 4 No. 3

A bimonthly magazine about the War on Poverty

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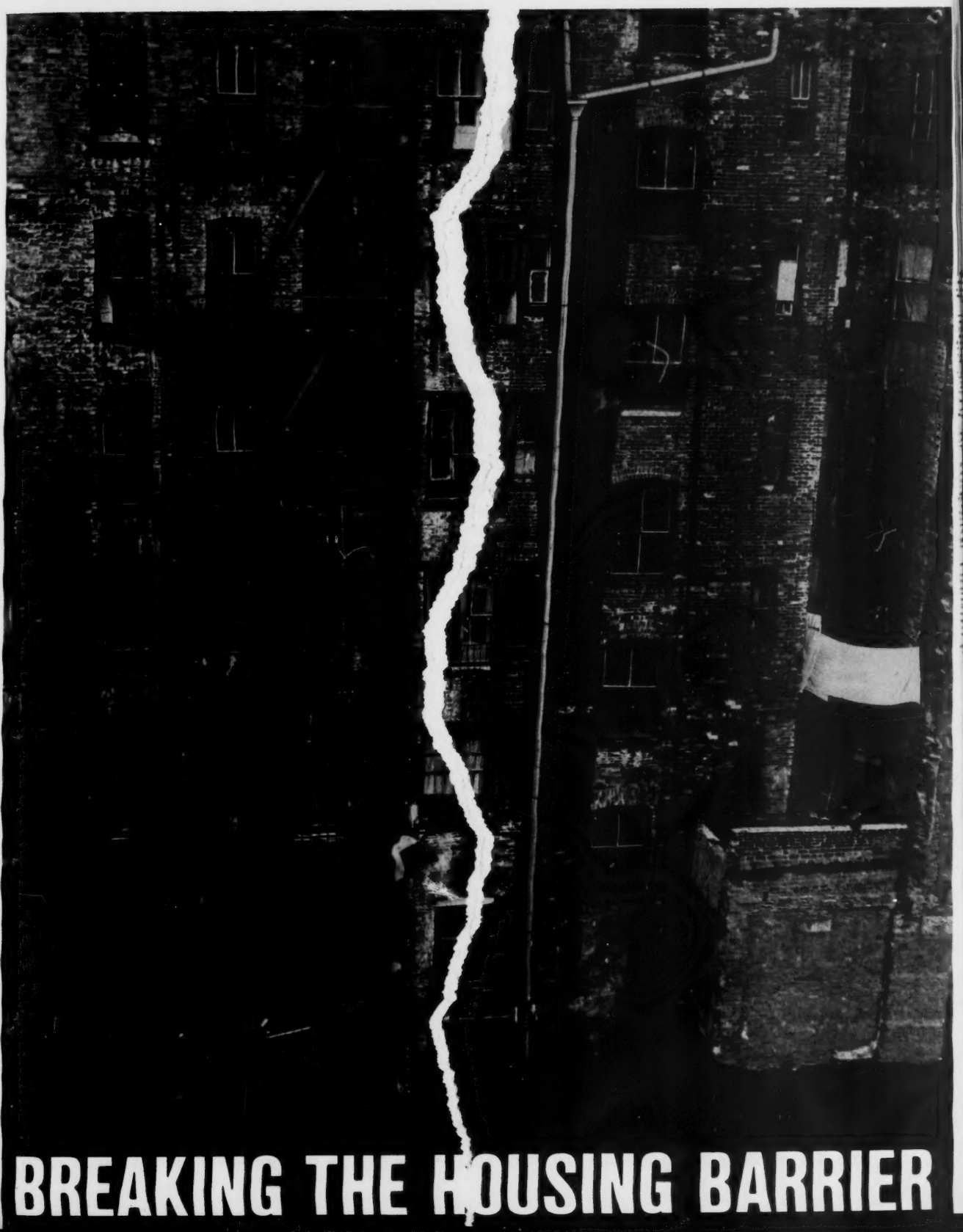
Communities in Action is published bi-monthly by the Community Action Program, Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C. 20506. Correspondence should be sent to Public Affairs Office, Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C. 20506. Use of funds for printing this publication approved by the Bureau of the Budget, May 15, 1967.


BREAKING THE HOUSING BARRIER

Government support of housing for the American people dates from 1934 and the creation of the Federal Housing Administration. Many efforts have been made to help low-income families become home owners. Nevertheless, attractive private housing has remained out of reach for poor families. Now, OEO's experiments with Community Action through Housing Development Corporations show that the many housing assistance programs can be mobilized to fulfill the promise of adequate low-income housing.

BREAKING THE HOUSING BARRIER

Last year, Univa Satterwhite lived in a dilapidated old house in a slum that is slated for urban renewal in Washington, D.C. She rented the substandard house for $90 per month, and that was more than she could really afford. Worse, there was no better place into which she could afford to move. Now, on the same block, she lives in a house that has been repaired, remodeled, and refurbished. It's a home to be proud of. And Univa Satterwhite rents no more. She owns her new home. The long term payments she is making on her new $15,000 mortgage are only $49.50 per month.

This case illustrates the results of a dramatic new practice in low-income housing. It shows what is happening in areas of community action against poverty—wherever a non-profit corporation is developed with sufficient strength to implement the existing housing assistance programs, to make them work for the poor.

It had to happen.

More than 30 years ago, the nation undertook to provide housing for citizens too poor to get decent shelter privately. The emphasis then was on public housing projects. And although such projects were superior to the contemporary, grimy tenements of the slums, they stamped a permanent imprint of poverty on many of the 2.5 million Americans who occupy them. Too many of the 780,000 public housing units are in massive, unattractive, institutional projects that segregate poor people from the rest of American citizenry.

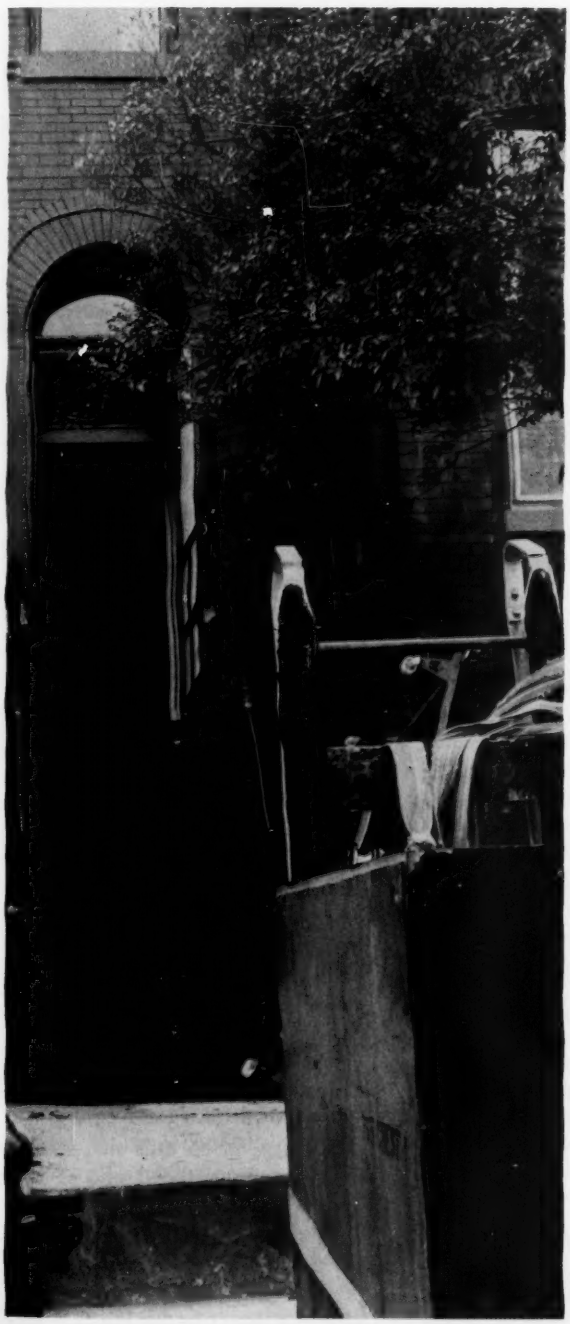
Just 20 years ago, the nation embarked on programs to help low-income families buy or rent private housing. And seven years ago, when the Congress established mortgage programs at below-market interest rates, the federal effort was expanded to create more far-reaching assistance for the poor. Financial guarantees were extended for non-profit organizations that would build or rehabilitate housing for the poor. And a number of churches and labor unions tried. But, as middle class housing boomed, the poor remained stranded in slums that grew ever more impacted while deteriorating ever faster.

Thus, the national attempt to bring private housing to the poor was foundering. The poor were unable to make use of the government programs, and the non-profit agencies that tried to help them were too weak to do the job. Beginning in 1966, the Office of Economic Opportunity expended funds and energies in experiments with Housing Development Corporations, the newest entries in the low-income housing field. The results show that the OEO-aided corporations can, at last, make the older programs serve the poor.

Univa Satterwhite was able to purchase her own home only because a slum landlord first sold it to a church-supported housing development corporation. That group rebuilt the house and resold it to Mrs. Satterwhite, with a one percent interest rate on a Federal mortgage. The church-supported development corporation was able to complete only nine such homes in 1968, and plans to continue with 16 more houses for the poor in the months ahead. Though each house is a victory over slum conditions, the rate is painfully slow.

At the same time and in the same city, an OEO-supported Housing Development Corporation was rehabilitating a 274-unit apartment complex. And several groups of individual homes were remodeled and rebuilt for sale to poor families under one percent interest mortgages. By concentrated effort, the Housing Development Corporation was preparing 1,000 units of good housing for the poor in a single year. Low-income families are thus enabled to buy $15 million worth of

housing. The entire cost to OEO was only $935,000, and $200,000 of that remains indefinitely with the Housing Development Corporation to be used and recovered again and again in the process of rehabilitating and reselling low-income housing.



Almost all housing development corporations rely on such revolving funds to pay for acquisition of property. The non-profit corporation gets those funds back again, whenever it is able to negotiate a mortgage under any of the programs administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. It requires an expert staff in the fields of law and finance, as well as in architecture and engineering, if the corporations are to succeed.

To assist 11 fledgling housing development corporations in ghetto areas, OEO has awarded grants to cover part of their overhead costs and to build up their revolving funds. During 1967 and 1968, the OEO grants to those corporations totaled nearly $4.5 million. It made possible the construction or remodeling of more than 4,000 units for transfer to rental or ownership by low-income families.

These achievements have been paralleled by the accomplishments of privately supported housing development corporations in 10 or more cities across the nation. Those cities include Cambridge, Cleveland, Corpus Christi, Detroit, Hartford, Houston, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, Rochester, and Wilmington. Although the private non-profit corporations have not all developed the volume of housing that is developed by the OEO-supported corporations, their achievements have nevertheless reinforced the apparent value of OEO's community action apprcach to solving the housing problems of the poor.

Recognition of the role of the new housing development corporations has spread throughout the nation. In the first round of Model Cities applications, more than 40 included a housing development corporation in their plans. They relied on the OEO demonstrations that such corporations can bring the intended benefits of housing programs to poor families who could not get those benefits alone.

The OEO projects have spotlighted yet another achievement of the housing development corporations. Where the corporations extend credit management and counsel to the poor, in addition to real estate services, mortgage defaults are rare.

In recognition of the usefulness of such corporations in the effort to upgrade low-income housing, the 90th Congress, in the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, authorized federal loans to the non-profit corporations, to cover 80 percent of the cost of acquiring property and preparing for its improvement and sale to the poor.

But because no funds were appropriated this year for such loans, it remains for OEO, local governments, and private agencies to continue the expansion of housing development corporations.

how to stop worrying and learn to

Two million North Carolinians live in substandard housing. They represent 40 percent of the state's five million people. They live in homes that get cold in the winter, leaky when it rains, homes with sagging stairways and porches and holes in the walls that welcome rats and roaches, apartments with broken windows and exposed wiring, housing that is a danger to health and safety—what the laws call "unsafe and unsanitary." Some 500,000 new or rehabilitated units are needed to meet this crisis. Yet only 21,000 have been completed or are under construction to meet the need.

In North Carolina—as in many other states — the figures suggest that the housing crisis has a kind of Malthusian hopelessness about it. There is no easy answer. The government does not have a ready solution. However, thousands of enterprising people in 21 North Carolina cities are working with a remarkable new program that could have far-reaching results in better housing for the poor. The project combines the expertise of an OEO-funded non-profit agency, the initiative of poverty communities and churches, the able cooperation of local public officials and often the support of the business community.

Twenty-nine community organizations in 21 cities are learning the complicated art of obtaining funds to rehabilitate or build new housing for the poor. The man behind this unusual self-help venture is Walter "Bob" Smith, 51, a congenial, articulate former federal housing official with an expert's grasp of the housing business. From a sparsely furnished office in downtown Durham, he directs a statewide housing development corporation created by the North Carolina Fund and financed by the Office of Economic Opportunity. Its work is to build housing know-how into poverty community groups to help them solve their own housing problems.

Smith feels that his Low Income Housing Development Corporation is making important headway. The best evidence of this can be found in a semi-rural neighborhood on the outskirts of the state capital city of Raleigh. A $1 million, 100-unit low-income housing project developed by a local agency sponsored by five churches (three black and two white) is scheduled to receive its first tenants in January, 1969. Although the local agency received an interest free loan of $30,000 to cover the initial administrative costs and a great deal of technical assistance from LIDHC, the local people carried out the development themselves. It took the local group, the Raleigh Inter-Church Housing Inc. (RICH), 18 months to develop the project. That is three times as long as it would have taken if the LIHDC did the work for them, Smith said. The important result is that RICH, having traversed the housing labyrinth once and having taken the hard knocks, now knows how to develop a housing project on its own.

The RICH project is located in a clump of pine trees on the other side of town from the Negro ghetto in Raleigh, in an area that adjoins a white neighborhood and is near several colleges.

The process that led to the project called RICH Park started back in 1966. The men who started it were the Rev. Charles Ward, pastor

to love the housing system

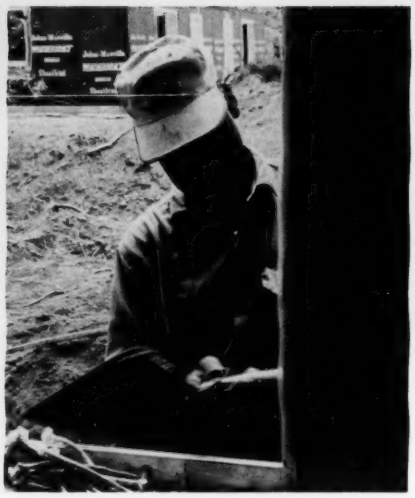
of the black First Baptist Church in Raleigh, and community and civil rights leader, and the Rev. Frank Hutchison, white pastor of the Negro Davie Street Presbyterian Church. Before the LIHDC was founded in early 1967, the Rev. Ward had a dream of building decent housing for low-income people. Largely through his efforts, the pastors of five churches met around Christmas in 1966 to explore the possibility of building some kind of low-income housing. While they were studying the idea, the LIHDC came into existence, initially intended to serve four cities that did not include Raleigh. However, the Rev. Ward was insistent that the new agency help his group. It was partly as a result of Ward's request for help that the LIHDC broadened its mission to become a statewide agency. With LIHDC's help, the Raleigh churches decided to take on the million dollar job of developing a project. The congregations raised more than $2,000 as "earnest" money. The interest-free loan from LIHDC represented 10 percent of its capital investment fund. The $30,000 was returned six months after the loan was made, when the Federal Housing Administration made a final commitment for the cost of the RICH project. Thus the corporation could have ten such projects underway simultaneously, with the same funds being used many times over. The more experienced the local sponsor becomes, the less time it takes to obtain FHA's commitment, and the corporation's precious capital funds are tied up for shorter and shorter periods of time.

Between the time of the first preliminary commitment of the local sponsor in Raleigh and the final approval by FHA, there took place a process of bewildering complexity. Forms were filed, conferences were held, skeptics in the sponsoring agency had to be persuaded, building sites were looked at, local officials were contacted, lawyers and architects were retained.

Bob Smith is proud to have helped in giving a measure of expertise to the RICH group. "The next time they want to put up a low-income housing project they'll be qualified to handle the expert side of the operation themselves," he said. "When RICH leaders go to a city council meeting now, they already know as much about housing issues as the real estate interests. They can now supply the mayor and the city council with the ammunition they need to protect the poor."

"With what this group has learned already, no one can throw their people out of existing houses to make way for urban renewal projects without guaranteeing accommodation for the people who get moved out. LIHDC's task is to train groups comparable to RICH all across the state. So that, when OEO cuts off our grant, we have knowledgeable community leadership . . . committed to better housing for the poor."

The Low Income Housing Development Corporation, which has received $700,000 in OEO funds, provides non-profit groups like RICH with the technical advice and the "seed money" to build or rehabilitate low-cost housing. LIHDC's task—in most communities—is to interest and stimulate local groups—such as churches, labor unions, educational institutions—to take advantage of the public and



"... OEO shouldn't be judged by the number of units it puts up buby

private resources available. The main source is the Federal Housing Administration's rent supplement program, which provides up to 70 percent subsidy of rents; and its below-market interest rate financing, which is 3 percent a year on a 40-year mortgage.

It has taken nearly two years to get 29 local organizations in motion, developing plans and projects. Churches, often the only broadly-based institutions in poverty areas, have proven to be the most frequent sponsors. But local industry, city officials, and CAAs have made important contributions of cash or leadership in several cities. In Thomasville, N. C., Thomasville Industries, a furniture manufacturer, has contributed $10,000 toward a 100-unit rent supplement project that will serve families with incomes of $2,100 a year and up.

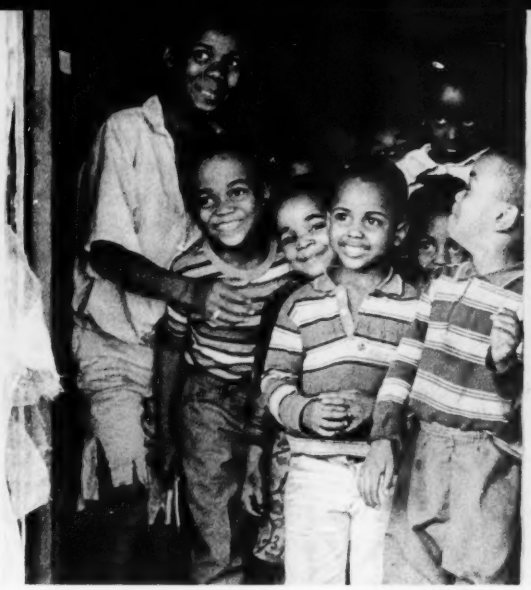
In Winston-Salem, the state's third largest city, the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and the Hanes Companies, makers of textiles, have helped to form an Urban Coalition. LIHDC helped the coalition plan to build 7,000 housing units in seven years and to hire a housing director to carry out the effort. Business and philanthropic leaders have raised some $2.3 million for housing, jobs, and education. Smith said the housing plan is aimed at completely changing the environment in the slums and is based on the premise that you cannot expect greater achievement from slum dwellers until they are out of the slums. The Presbytery of Winston-Salem has agreed to put $10,000 into one new housing project.

In Greensboro, North Carolina's second-largest city, the Redevelopment Commission has taken a strong lead in developing a project sponsored by a Baptist church. The mayor and other city agencies have given full cooperation to the effort. Smith said that mayors have generally been most receptive while their appointed officials are more cautious toward new housing ventures.

In Asheville, the Junior Chamber of Commerce has offered to play a central role in a 130-unit rent supplement project sponsored by five churches. A community-wide housing development corporation is being formed. In Charlotte, one Negro congregation is sponsoring a 150-unit rent supplement project. In the seacoast town of Wilmington, LIHDC is working with the Community Action Agency and the Longshoremen's Union to develop a program. In New Bern, the mayor and the Community Action Agency have jointly established a low income housing development corporation.

Smith said LIHDC often has to persuade local people that a modest investment of a few thousand dollars can be turned into a million dollar project. In many cases, the support of local people has to be cultivated. In Raleigh, the mayor and other public officials welcomed and cooperated with the RICH Park project. Although there are pitfalls, the LIHDC staff has worked skillfully to help blacks and whites work together. The racially mixed staff seems well equipped to deal with all segments of the community, and with groups that are not accustomed to working together.

Moses Burt, 37, former member of Floyd McKissick's law firm in Durham, is the deputy director of LIHDC. He is as intense as Smith



but by the amount of training it gives to the people who put them up."

is easygoing. Burt knows the Negro church, civic, and education leaders in the state and he spreads the word among them that housing is an important way to fight poverty. When he came to LIHDC from the North Carolina Fund in 1967, Burt knew little about the housing game. Today he is an expert.

Frank Parker, a former economic analyst for HUD in Atlanta, is assistant director for programs. Smith said Parker is one of the shrewdest negotiators in the business. Parker knows personally many local officials and civic leaders in the white community.

Smith's background includes service with the Federal Housing Administration, the State Department, and the real estate business.

Curiously, the poor have to be convinced that they can strive for better housing. Discussing the complicated housing business with a low-income family can be frustrating, Smith said. "How can you explain the long-term cost and efficiency differences between gas and oil to a guy who has lived all his life with one space heater for a family of ten?"

The LIHDC seeks to provide in local projects not just the four walls furnished by most landlords, but a "total community" including employment, education, recreation and other services and a sense of community pride. Smith said a new housing project must be located in the right setting. For example, if 100 new units were located in an impacted slum neighborhood, they may tend to sink to the shabby level of their surroundings. However, if they were placed in a blighted area with several hundred salvageable homes, they could lead to the improvement of those homes and the neighborhood as a whole.

The agency is making plans to share its hard-earned experience with interested groups in other states. Economist Carol Van Alstyne is directing an effort to prepare a manual detailing the hundreds of steps that need to be taken by a local agency in developing low-cost housing. The whole development process has been laid out graphically in a 200-square foot chart in the LIHDC office. This wealth of material will be distilled into a manual to help those with no knowledge of the field to develop a project such as RICH Park.

While Bob Smith is in the business of producing short-term results, he takes a long view of the situation. "Housing is the most critical issue this country faces and it's going to take two generations to solve it. The big problem isn't so much money as trained people to tap the existing resources now, and thousands of additional local housing experts ready to go to work later when the really big money from federal and private sources becomes available."

"That's why," he said, "OEO shouldn't be judged by the number of units it puts up but by the amount of training it gives to the people who put them up."

Smith believes his organization can inspire local leaders to take action on housing, and that they will, in turn, influence others in the process. With another 100 or so local housing advocates like the Rev. Ward, solution of the state's housing crisis would become a far more attainable goal.

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In California, where 50,000 or more large families of farm workers exist on family incomes of less than $4,000 per year, most rural housing is unsafe and unsanitary, with no running water. For about 300,000 poor people there have been only two apparent alternatives. They could live in the tin shacks of migrant camps or hobo jungles in the countryside, or they could take desperate flight into the big-city slums. A research and demonstration project financed by the Office of Economic Opportunity now indicates that good housing can be made available to the rural poor.

by CHARLES WALTER

With his wife and six children, Ramon Mascorro journeyed out of Texas two years ago to become a farm worker in California. At first, earning about $240 per month, the family lived in a shanty and shared a community bath with 11 other families. But for the past year the Mascorro family has lived in a modern, three-bedroom unit of a triplex. The rent is only $45 per month.

This illustrates one small assault upon the immense problem of inadequate housing in rural California where the federal census and a governor's commission found 300,000 persons in families with income under $4,000 and without decent homes. Mr. and Mrs. Mascorro's new home, built with federal funds awarded to the state for a housing research project in Kern County, shows the widespread recognition of the critical nature of the housing problem.

But the Mascorro home represents only a faint and very remote promise of adequate housing for the 50,000 families still living in squalor in the nondescript areas between the cities and the immense, mechanized farms in California. Housing such as Mascorro's could not be made available to all the rural-poor Californians, and they probably wouldn't accept it anyway. Why? Because three years were required for construction of only about 30 housing units in the experimental federal-state program of which the Mascorro home is a part. And that housing is for migrants. It is owned and operated by government, and located in a labor camp. Such segregation from the American community-at-large is generally rejected by the rural population that is stabilizing more and migrating less as big "agribusiness" turns to automation to replace stoop-labor.

Faced with the reality that even the most improved labor camps would not solve the housing problem, California has been searching for some better idea. Accordingly, a group of financial experts, attorneys, real estate men, and community action leaders banded together to form the non-profit California Rural Development Corporation. The agency serves as technical

adviser and assistant, and as temporary money-lender, and supporter, of organizations of the indigenous poor who would own and operate their own cooperative housing ventures.

The RDC's job, never attempted before, is to adapt the programs of home ownership and rent supplements—developed in urban setting—for use by non-profit groups of the rural poor. And while helping the poor succeed in private, non-profit corporate and cooperative housing construction projects, the RDC also guides the poor into profit-making trades and service enterprises within the new-housing communities. This means for the RDC a statewide role as a developer of entire villages on a scale to rival the largest private real estate companies. It requires the development of completely new, totally-planned, low density and low-income communities—without slums—in which the residents would become more prosperous in a growing variety of occupations. Money will flow into the new communities, but never out to absentee landlords and entrepreneurs.

Poured into the new Rural Development Corporation, from the start, was expertise in both the public and private sectors, the law, finance, real estate, utilities, engineering and architecture. Encouragement and help came from the Economic Development Administration, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, members of Congress and state officials. Significantly, the new RDC was enthusiastically cheered by rural, low-income residents of the state. Farm workers, deliverymen, gas station attendants and service workers are represented among the daily occupations of the men on RDC's board of directors. They and the community action workers hold the same voting power on the board as representatives of the ministry, schools and hospitals, and the various professions.

In early 1968, the Office of Economic Opportunity made a demonstration grant of $570,000. Of that sum, $210,000 constitutes a working capital fund to be used for land acquisition and site development costs that are repaid out of mortgage proceeds.

The daily activities of the RDC are directed by Steve Kerpen, a youthful and energetic architect who previously served with the Architects' Renewal Committee in Harlem and as a consultant to the San Francisco Community Action Agency. As executive director of the RDC, he succeeds Howard Miller, an associate professor of law at the University of Southern California. Miller shepherded the new organization through its formative period before turning over the reins to Kerpen in the spring of 1968.

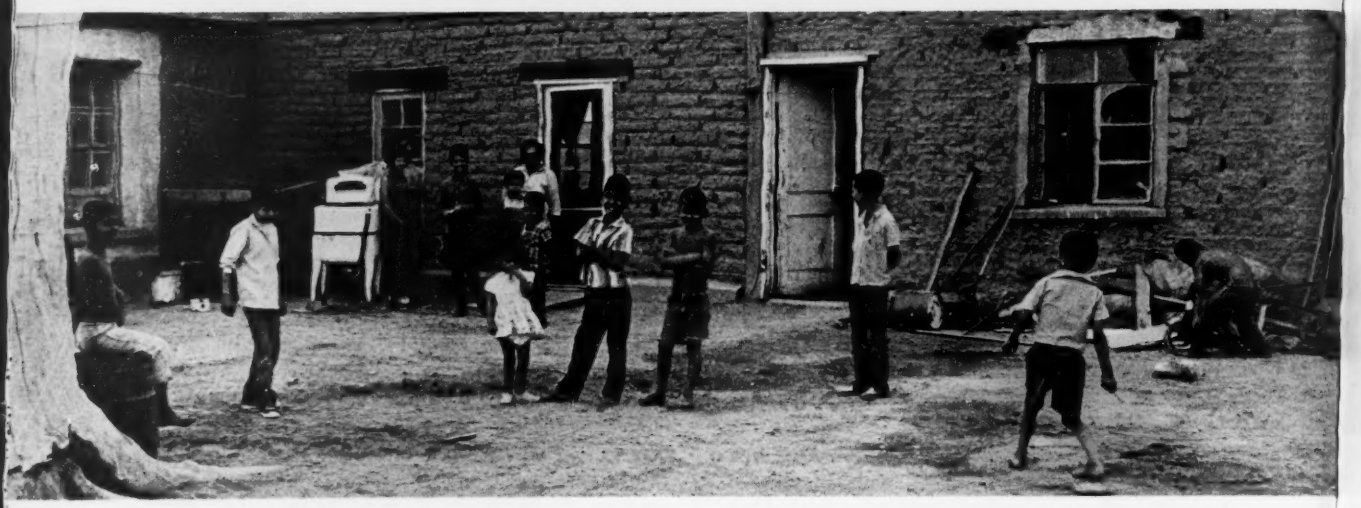
"We're drawing on the abilities of the foremost architects of low-cost housing in the country," says Kerpen. "We're being innovative. And we have three goals to attain. We're creating good housing that poor people otherwise wouldn't get. We will stabilize the rural patterns of migration, so that families may take advantage of the educational and antipoverty services in their home communities. Finally, we will demonstrate that the development of housing brings with it so many new jobs and careers for the local poor that all the income levels will be improved."

The RDC is embarked on several projects. It is assisting a Self-Help Enterprises project in which the poor are actually building their own modern houses. The largest and most promising project is the development of a new community at Calexico, a small border city near the much larger Mexican city of Mexicali. Already, the project has shown how a big development corporation can help the poor.

Although the border crossings there number more than a million a month in the traffic between the United States and Mexico, the city of Calexico has remained a little-known concentration of poverty. Most of the population of about 10,000 is Mexican-American, and many neither speak nor write English. Most of them work as low-wage field laborers. About 80 percent of the housing is substandard and cruelly uninhabitable during the summer season when temperatures reach 125 degrees. So oppressive are the run-down houses that, on occasion, as many as 3,000 poor Mexican-Americans have been known to cross the border just to get a night's sleep in the coolness of old adobe.

The average size of a family in Calexico is six, and in more than half of them the annual income is less than $4,000. For 560 families, the annual income is less than $3,000. Home ownership is rare.

Even the seasons conspire against those poor people. The harvest comes early in the Imperial Valley, so the farm work is finished before summer begins each year. Then the farm workers trek to northern California to gain employment in later harvests, taking their families along. They all return to Calexico in the fall. The result is short-term, high-rent occupancy of poor housing in Calexico in the winter, and short-term, high-rent occupancy of poor housing in northern California in the summer, plus the economic drain of migrating twice a year. Worse, the children are seldom able to remain in Calexico through an entire school year, with immeasurable disruption of their education. The farm workers recognized that ownership of decent houses in Calexico would be better, both economically and socially. They could travel to work while their families remained at home year around.



The need was great. So was the opportunity, in the eyes of RDC. Careful surveys disclosed that land and community facilities were available at reasonable prices, and a local action group already existed in the Calexico American Citizens Club of more than 500 Mexican-Americans. So, when the local people asked for help, the RDC churned into action.

While liaison was established and endless technicalities negotiated with city, county and state regulatory agencies, the RDC also performed site studies and assisted the Citizens Club in reorganizing itself as the non-profit Calexico Community Action Council, a co-operative housing development corporation.

Although condominiums, apartment buildings, triplexes or duplexes might offer the most housing quickly, the farm workers said, "Oh, no!" They wanted nothing but individual houses, each on its own lot. Such is the cultural heritage of an agricultural people. Ample land was available a little distance from the city limits. But RDC found that a development out there would entail prohibitive costs for sewerage and utilities. Also, financing in the out-of-city area would have been arranged through Farmers Home Administration and the terms offered would have effectively barred participation by some poor families.

To move inside the city would solve the utilities and sewerage problems and would make possible easier terms of financing through the Federal Housing Administration. But land costs and zoning requirements would again make the cost prohibitive.

Representing all the poor families, both individually and collectively, the RDC negotiated credit terms for them with mortgage bankers and the different federal mortgage insurance agencies. At the same time, RDC invited architects to submit innovative design and construction plans. These ranged from various pre-fabrication methods in wood and metal to on-site construction with poly-urethane forms. Calexico's nonprofit corporation will choose the design that best suits its needs.

As the seemingly insurmountable problems were solved, commercial interests became aware that something big was afoot. And they tried to move in to profit from it. But the RDC had already used its own funds to secure a nine-year option on all the land, thus protecting the poor against outside exploitation of their project.

Cool and steady negotiations by the RDC and the local action council with the local governments cleared up both the site and financing problems. The new village was located outside but close to the city, where city utilities and services could be extended, and where good schools were available, but where the purchase price was $1,250 per acre less than the price of land that had already been developed. The city government agreed to annex the land, making the low-income families eligible for easier credit from the Federal Housing Administration.

Thus, with 250 individual houses underway with fair prospect for individual ownership, the RDC turned to upgrading the incomes of the beneficiary families. While assisting the action council with applications for assistance from the Economic Development Administration, the RDC made its optioned land available for development of a shopping center and light industry.

With Calexico's low-income community lined up for new homes and an expanding local job market, and with its capital funds returning from the $3,000,000 increase in Calexico's housing, the RDC is seeking to create more Calexicos through housing and economic development in other parts of rural California.

Busy in Beeville

by BETTY MACNABB

When a 6'3", 265-pound All-State tackle puts his muscle behind community action, it works.

At least, that's what happened in Beeville, Texas, hometown of Eliseo Sandoval.

A friendly, bustling community of 18,000 people, Beeville is located in the South Texas Coastal Plains 140 miles south of Austin. It has one of the best community action programs in the Southwest-

ern Region of OEO, and everybody in town knows it—and cares.

Eliseo, a giant of a man, operates the Community Council of Bee County from free office space in the Beeville Post Office basement. The office buzzes with activity and visitors—the Mayor, local contractors, city councilmen, teachers, visiting officials.

A few blocks away, in one of three corrugated metal warehouses rented from a former mayor for $10 a month, homebuilding trainees are operating the "Monster," a remarkable contraption that molds construction blocks and bricks with a clamor that sounds like a giant jackhammer gone wild.

Scattered around town are teams of building trainees. One group is re-roofing a small house under the supervision of a master carpenter. Another team is ripping out the wiring in an old dwelling, prior to re-wiring under supervision of the Beeville Schools' electrician. Still another team is laying a concrete tennis court for the local college.

Wherever the trainee teams work are large signs:

"A Community Action Program Operated by the Community Council of Bee County, Funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity. YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK."

The Community Action Agency in Bee County is just a little more than two years old, but it has a solid record of achievement and an unusual measure of community involvement. This is due largely to the zeal and outgoing personality of its executive director, Eliseo Sandoval.

Born in Beeville on February 18, 1939, Eliseo grew up there, graduated from A. C. Jones High where he picked up the All-State recognition and a football scholarship to Texas A & I. Graduating with a degree in business administration in 1964, Eliseo returned home to Beeville and coached football at his high school for a year. When the Community Council was funded on June 6, 1966, he was named director.

Sandoval had already joined the War on Poverty. Prior to the funding, he and 14 other volunteers surveyed Bee County's needs and established priorities for community action.

The volunteer surveyors discovered that 44 percent of the county's people live in poverty; 78 percent of the residents have Spanish surnames, 10 percent of the population is Negro. They found that 2,187 families—a total of 10,780 people—exist on a per capita annual income of $420. They found 1,100 substandard houses — no

baths, no running water, no sanitary facilities.

Sandoval and his volunteers set education, job training, and housing as priorities. They applied for, and got, a full-year Head Start program, then a day care center, then a summer Head Start, and then a family planning program. After starting children's programs, they began recruiting for Adult Basic Education courses at the local schools.

The Independent School District provided the Head Start classrooms and all facilities without charge. Churches donated day care space. The City of Beeville offered an unused municipal building for the family planning program and later for a multi-purpose service center. The school district asked for more Head Start classes, contributed $25,000 to help serve more children.

Sandoval was all over town, sparking enthusiasm and involvement wherever he went. The weekly newspaper, the *Bee County Picayune*, followed up his activities with front-page stories and friendly editorials.

One day a man walked into his office with a tale about a machine. Jessy Garza had acquired a contraption later to be known as the "Monster" as payment for a house-moving debt. At the time, he didn't even know what it was. He tinkered with the engine and four metal frames until he realized it was a block builder.

That was the beginning of the most ambitious housing and job training programs ever undertaken in Beeville. Garza was named Housing Coordinator, and began recruiting trainees.

Garza also found a free source of building materials. George Dickinson, a rancher seven miles east of Beeville, has a huge calcite quarry. Calcite, second only to granite in

hardness, is quarried out in great chunks by roadbuilders, to be crushed and used in highway surfacing.

Dickinson first offered to sell Garza the "slag," or leftover small chunks and dust of calcite, at a nominal cost; but he got so much favorable publicity, first in the *Picayune*, then in the *San Antonio Light*, that he refused all payment. So the job trainees have used some 350 cubic yards, or enough for more than 10,000 blocks and bricks.

The Housing/Job Training project, funded for $68,000 in February 1968, was in operation one week later, with Garza, one experienced mason, one experienced carpenter, and one master plumber as the staff.

By advertising in the paper and on the radio, and through the Texas Employment Commission, Garza found the first 16 trainees to learn and work on the job 40 hours a week for a $50 stipend. They are mostly young, unemployed or under-employed family heads who simply did not get enough education to make it by themselves. In addition to their-on-the-job training, they are now taking Adult Basic Education courses two nights a week.

There have been a few drop-outs in the program, but their places have been filled from a waiting list

to keep 16 trainees at all times.

The trainees are in demand as apprentices and helpers by local contractors, and do odd jobs for them on free evenings and Sundays. One contractor told a visitor he had 17 jobs underway at the moment, and was stymied by lack of help. He said he personally could employ every one of the trainees "right now," but that Garza refuses to let them go until they have at least a year of training.

Sandoval and Garza worked out a formula whereby poverty families can purchase the bricks and blocks for a few cents each, do as much of the work themselves as possible, and then call on the trainees for the more complicated plumbing, carpentry, and block or bricklaying. Poor people who are old and disabled get all their work done free.

An aged couple, the Patrico Chaveros, who lost everything in the wake of Hurricane Beulah, occupy the first trainee-built cottage. It is a small concrete and masonry dwelling with two bedrooms, living room-kitchen, and bath. Built at a total cost of $2,330, it is the nicest home they ever had.

The Chaveros' house made it easier for Garza to secure building and repair loans for other families; Beeville bankers and loan officers consider the trainees' construction jobs good risks.

The trainees have completed 27 jobs to date—new roofs, added bathrooms, remodelled kitchens, etc. They have learned to mix concrete, turn out blocks, and use the carpentry and plumbing tools and equipment furnished free by their skilled instructors.

There were 27 trainees in the program in its first six months; some, who already had some skills, have been placed in jobs. The others are guaranteed jobs when they complete training.

Meanwhile, the interest and involvement of the community continues at a fantastic level. A wealthy businessman, Dudley T. Dougherty, gave $10,000 to the Community Council to establish a revolving loan fund for people who are unable to get building or repair loans from any other source; Dougherty promised to donate another $10,000 if it's needed. Other businessmen have contributed various amounts.

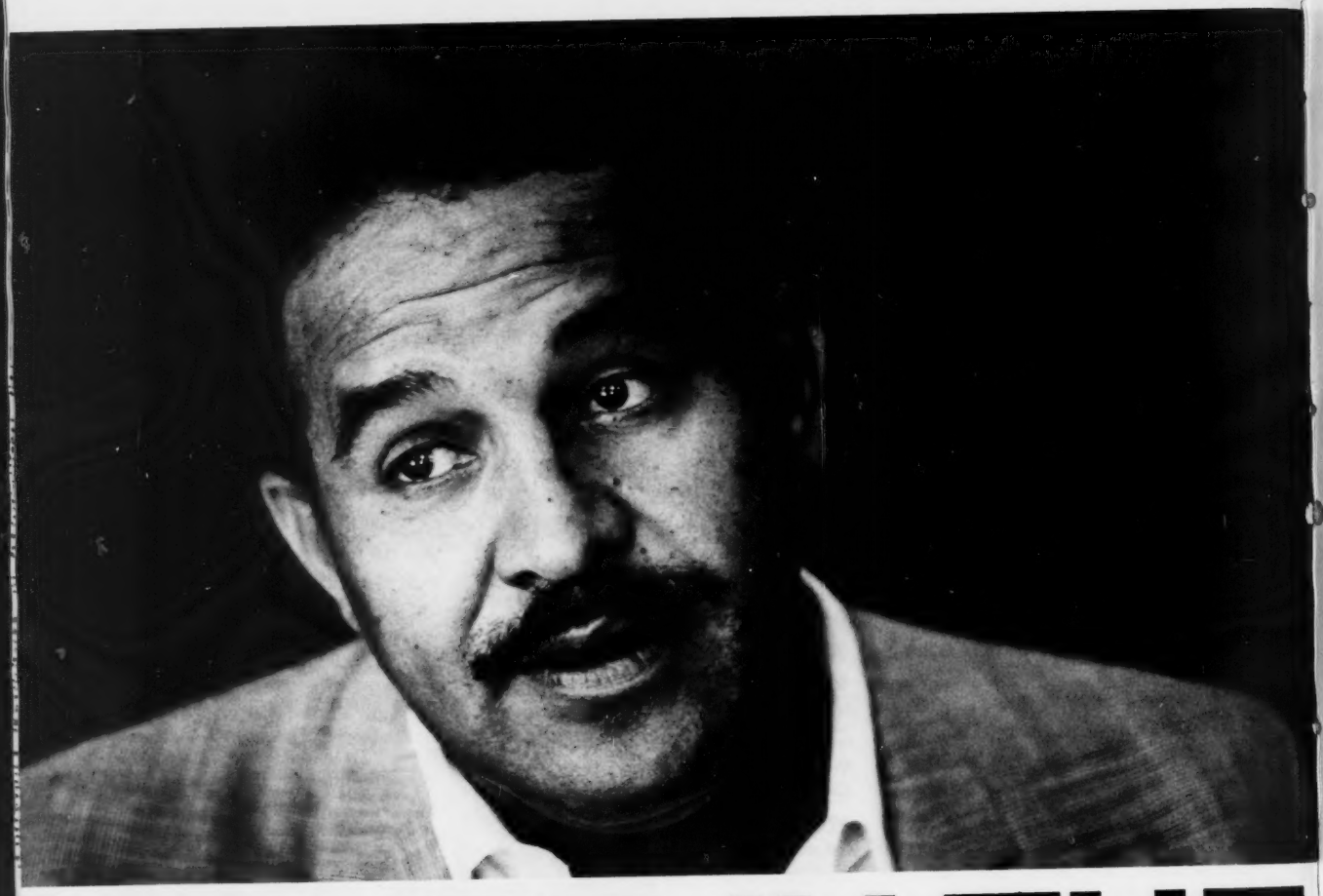
City fathers call the Housing/Job Training project *"our* building program." A contractor gives the Council $3,130 worth of concrete mix. The school electrician works for the CAA when he is needed; the trainees work for the city, the schools, or the Beeville Community College when needed.

Interested townspeople have donated used doors, lumber, hardware such as doorknobs and windowscreens, old sinks and bathtubs, pipes, refrigerators, and stoves, for the building program.

"Somebody will need these things one of these days," says Sandoval. "When they do, we'll have them all repaired and cleaned and ready."

Everything including the kitchen sink—that's community action in Beeville.

Betty L. MacNabb, a former reporter with the Houston Post and the Charleston (S. C.) News and Courier, is an information officer with OEO regional office in Austin, Texas.



MOVER IN THE

E GHETTO

Meet Paul E. Daniels, 42, a Louisville native, store owner, part-time contractor, full-time antipoverty worker. The directors of the Louisville antipoverty agency say he's one of their best. A restless, energetic man, he visits the hangouts in poverty neighborhoods, where he is well known, searching out those who need work, helping them get jobs, directing people to legal services or the welfare department, passing out rat-control petitions. "I take care of what I run into" is his description. Officially, he is a special assistant for community organization in the main office of the Louisville Community Action Commission. He is partner in a black culture center called the Corner of Jazz which sells ethnic clothing, jewelry, records, books.

At 16th and Walnut in the ghetto, Daniels passes out applications for a job training program. Minutes later a man in a doorway calls out asking if he has a rat-control petition. He takes Daniels to his dilapidated house and shows him a hole in the bedroom chewed by rats, he says. In another part of the building, a blind woman complains bitterly that the rats are as "big as cats." Paul Daniels helps her sign the petition. Another man in a darkened room complains of a pile of trash in the alley. Daniels promises to see about more litter baskets.

He goes into a bar/poolroom and finds a man who wants work. Outside he finds another, lounging on the sidewalk with a bottle of soda. He drives them to Novatex, a manufacturer of pillow stuffing that is starting to produce barrel-shaped furniture. He has placed many men with the firm, which is willing to take completely unskilled workers and train them. The next day, only one of the men showed up and was being trained. Daniels' response: "I don't give up on them. It makes no difference even if he goes back to jail. If I can't get him on here (Novatex), I'll get him on somewhere else." He has no false hopes. "Maybe out of every ten men, I'll really be able to help three."

Another day. Daniels walks into a shabby 24-hour-a-day restaurant called the "skin hole" (named after the "Georgia skin game," a card game in which you can lose money fast) and finds five more

Photo story by PAUL CONKLIN

"The relief mother who needs money is going to turn to boosting and prostitution if she has to. Survival is what she's worried about."

candidates, including a safe cracker who has served three prison terms. Daniels philosophizes: "I've been this route myself. I've had the door slammed in my face. And now I'm getting people jobs—if that ain't America! A lot of these people you see on the street have given up, and we're helping them back from the dead. . . . They have three strikes on them—they're black, they have no education and they have police records. These are guys who would give anything to get a good job so they won't have to steal . . . or take a chance on cards." Later, he continues. "They won't even interview you if you have a record. . . . You're being prejudged. A man can't get a break. But people have to have cars, pay their rent, survive. The relief mother who needs money is going to turn to boosting and prostitution if she has to. Survival is what she's worried about."

"I used to bootleg whiskey here ten years ago. I had two garbage cans full of liquor in that alley. People would drive right through and buy it. It was like a drive-in." Daniels said he decided to go straight because he didn't want his three children to grow up with a hood for a father. In his present work, he feels he is an example for others. "It's important that I make it so I can show them that somebody can come through a winner—that they can do it too." Daniels, one of seven children, said his father was "an honest man who worked himself to death in a foundry. I swore I'd never work in a foundry like that with hot iron." He escaped from 16th and Walnut nine years ago. The Daniels family now live in a small house in Louisville's West End. Organizer Daniels feels he and the poverty program are making progress in Louisville. "I can see some smiles these days. That's when you know you're getting somewhere."

"I've had the door slammed in my face. And now I'm getting people jobs . . . if that ain't America!"

BRIDGING THE CREDENTIALS GAP

"The belief that young men from disadvantaged minorities are unable to perform technical jobs in medicine is just nonsense."

by CHARLES WALTER

Thousands of commuters zip past Pacoima along the Golden State Freeway into Los Angeles each day. But they are generally unaware of the squalor in that city behind the San Gabriel Mountains. There is naught to attract the eye to the sagging low frame houses, to the grey and aged midtown public housing complex, or to the drab main street of grimy storefronts. Pacoima has no industry. There isn't a bowling alley, a roller rink, or a movie house in town.

Most inhabitants labor at low-pay jobs on remote farms or assembly lines—or, too often, just stay home in dreariness as fitful welfare recipients. More than 70,000 people live in and around Pacoima, on the fringes of the rich San Fernando Valley, and most of them are poor.

But there's a glow about Pacoima now, resulting from a brilliant new demonstration project in the War on Poverty. A few score of those poor people have started along the way to good jobs in compassionate service to their fellow citizens. They are changing their roles in life. From the ranks of the unemployed, underemployed, school dropouts, or ex-cons, they are changing into expert medical technicians. Qualified to fill desperate shortages in paramedical personnel, they will take jobs at salaries from $475 to $700 a month. It is a demonstration that the disadvantaged can fill a critical void in the nation's skilled working force—and be poor no more.

Intriguingly rooted in the area's history are the circumstances that brought about the Pacoima project. Although best known, perhaps a half-century ago, as one terminal of a rustic old railroad and the site of a fancy brothel for the gentry, Pacoima was also recognized for its salubrious climate and much favored for sanitariums. But the agricultural and industrial boom in Southern California during World War II brought masses of Negroes and Mexican-Americans into the area. And subsequent economic drift created a low-level ghetto.

A few years ago, a tragedy occurred at Pacoima. An airliner crash injured a number of children at a school and, because there was no community hospital, they had to be hauled more than 20 miles into Los Angeles to receive treatment. As a result, the aroused citizenry backed a move to build a hospital under the direction of Rev. John Simmons. He had been a close associate of Hubert H. Humphrey in the 1940s in Minneapolis but had moved to California when Humphrey went to Washington. The Lutheran Hospital of Pacoima, which Rev. Simmons still directs, stands on a mountain slope just outside the city limits and is slated for early expansion.

In 1966, Rev. Simmons and other community leaders undertook to close what they describe as "the Credentials Gap." They noted that the unemployed cannot get jobs because they have no diplomas, degrees, or employment records to serve as credentials. So they established Casa Loma College, a community college of applied sciences and arts, recognized by the state, to give practical education to the economically,

socially and culturally deprived people of the Pacoima area. The job of setting up the Casa Loma program went to Albert M. Elton, a retired Air Force colonel who was chairman of the Department of Aerospace Studies at UCLA. He is executive vice-president of the college.

Then, as part of the effort to "keep the streets cool" during the racially tense summer of 1967, a group of 50 unemployed youths in the Pacoima area were hired to work in various jobs in the new hospital, at $1.40 per hour.

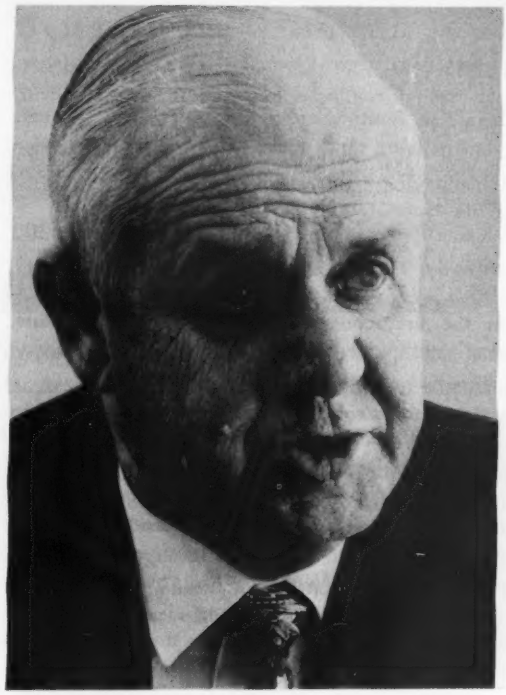
"They wore hospital jackets and name-tags identifying them as members of the various departments, nursing, physical therapy, inhalation therapy, and the rest. They mingled with and were accepted as equals by the rest of the hospital employees. And they did a marvelous job," says Col. Elton. And as an eye-opening result of the 10-week summer program, 13 of the 50 youths were kept on permanently by the hospital at better pay. Another 26 went back to school to prepare themselves for a return to hospital employment. The remainder of the group was able to find other employment on the basis of their performance at the hospital and the recommendations they won.

"The belief that young men from disadvantaged minorities are unable to perform technical jobs in medicine is just nonsense," asserts Col. Elton. "In the military services, youths from poor backgrounds have become ideal medical assistants. And when they win ratings in those specialties it brings about a great change for the good in their attitudes and in their relationships with other individuals and with their peer groups."

On that basis, Casa Loma College set out to prove that poor Negroes and Mexican-Americans could be recruited, trained, and placed in the paramedical jobs that were vacant because of the nationwide skills shortage. Assistance was sought from the Office of Economic Opportunity, and a $29,000 grant was awarded to the college for program planning and development.

Outreach workers were hired and sent into the streets to recruit 300 applicants for training. In the meantime, Casa Loma worked to develop courses that would lead not to dead-end, low-level health service jobs as aides, but to technician occupations in laboratories, medical libraries, operating rooms and other hospital departments.

Ascertaining the job potential for students in the courses was as much a part of the program development as was the development of curricula. And to get it just right, Col. Elton met with 32 hospital administrators to pick the fields of medical technology that held the most promise of ready employment at the highest nonprofessional wages. "We weren't interested



Albert M. Elton

Charles Walter, former managing editor of daily newspapers in Rock Hill, South Carolina and Plattsburg, New York, recently came to OEO Public Affairs from Medical Economics magazine, where he was a senior editor.

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in anything that would pay our students less than $475 a month when they finished their courses and went to work," said Col. Elton.

Job placement for the students never became a problem, because the hospitals agreed to conduct the on-the-job portion of the training in each course, and then hire those tailor-made technicians themselves.

Six fields of medical technology were selected by Casa Loma and the hospital administrators, and curricula were developed for them. They are the fields of inhalation therapy including the maintenance and operation of positive pressure respiratory equipment; dental technology including the manufacture of false teeth; psychiatric assistants including both inpatient and outpatient service; physiotherapy technicians; medical record technicians; and hospital emergency technicians. Graduates from each of those courses will be eligible for national certification, sponsors hope.

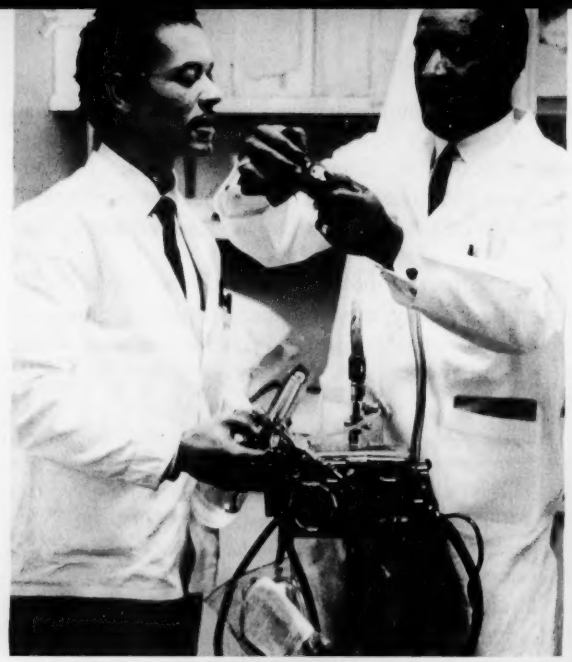
The Casa Loma program and the course curricula were then submitted to OEO and to appropriate medical authorities, while the college assembled a group of class leaders who were designated as TCEs—teacher-counselor-evaluator. These leaders are working with the students in seminars to assist in changes in their attitudinal patterns and motivation. The TCEs also help with remedial education, if required, and preparation for high school equivalency exams.

The leaders also interviewed and screened the 300 applicants who were brought in by the outreach effort. Of the 300 poor young men and women who sought to enter the first courses, 90 were school dropouts, 143 were unemployed, and 67 were underemployed and seeking a new door to a more productive career. A cross-section was selected to fill the 65 slots available. While all were desperately poor, the selected group also included a sprinkling of eager releasees from reform school or penitentiary.

The OEO awarded a CAP research and demonstration grant of more than $400,000, to support the Casa Loma courses for 12 months. And so the program went into operation with each student receiving a stipend of $56 per week. Because the students displayed such immediate effort and enthusiasm, many also won instant part-time employment in the hospitals, boosting their incomes.

Because the Mexican-American population of the area slightly outnumbers the blacks and the Mexican-Americans hold a cultural heritage of artistry in pottery and ceramics, the course in dental technology became the biggest with 16 students in the first serial.

Most of the women enrolled in the medical library technicians course. Among them are two poor women who quit low-pay, dead-end clerical jobs in

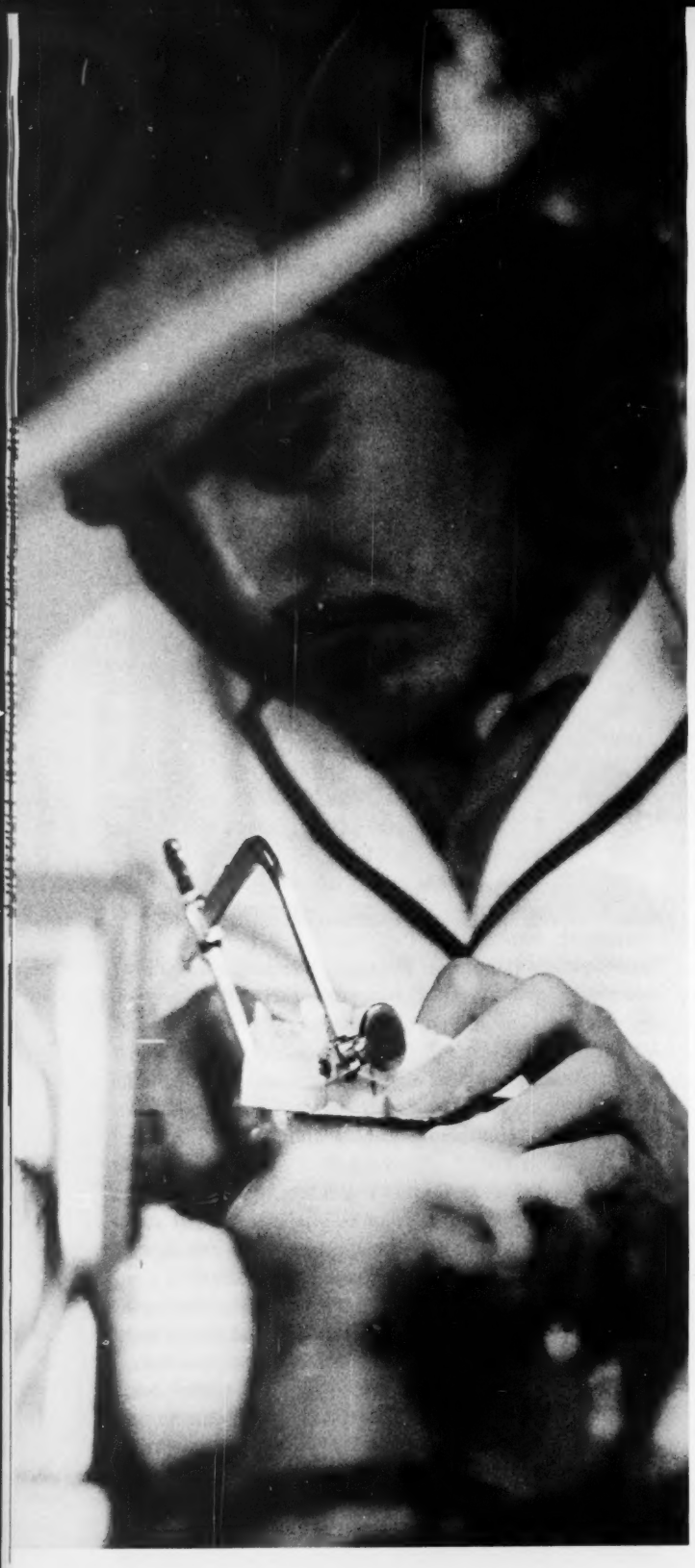


order to get into the medical program at Casa Loma. And a particularly promising student in the course is Hyacinth Harris, a girl from Jamaica who had heretofore been unable to find any employment except as a housemaid during her two years in the United States.

Four older trainees, aged 25 to 28, Rufus Duer, Hillary Noel, Richard Redd and James Robinson, chose to enter the hardest course, to be hospital emergency technicians. Their training is almost making assistant physicians of them, and includes emergency care delivered at accident scenes via helicopter. Their futures, and the careers of other poor men who follow them, are assured by jobs with starting pay of $500 per month and rapid promotion beyond that. The hospital emergency technician is a newly emerging paramedical job.

All the Casa Loma project participants are drawn from the depressed area of 25 square miles around the college's new, two-story class building. It is the biggest building in Pacoima. The students are also working and training in community hospitals in the nearby towns, San Fernando, Granada Hills, Sherman Oaks, Inglewood, Sunland, and Tujunga. The larger hospitals also assisting the Casa Loma project are the University Hospital of UCLA and the regional Veterans Administration Hospital. Of note is a report from VA officials that this marks the first time a VA Hospital had been "dragged out of its ivory-tower isolation" to participate in community action and work with the poor.

Although the Casa Loma project has yet to complete its demonstration year and yet to graduate its first students, much has already been proven by this anti-poverty effort. There is significant job potential in the paramedical field to provide new careers for the erstwhile disadvantaged. America's hospitals and clinics are hamstrung by the shortage of skilled, compassionate workers. And the poor—black, brown, or white—are showing that they have the compassion and can attain the skill. The project has also demonstrated that curricula and teaching methods can be adapted to best serve the disadvantaged. Such adaptation also enables the project to attract a preponderance of male trainees instead of females. That is an improvement over the



preceding attempts at paramedical job training for the poor. Good jobs for the male heads of households are the key to lifting whole families out of poverty.

While Casa Loma and OEO continue to create opportunity for the poor residents of Pacoima, the possibility of future change and expansion in the program is already apparent. Future funding may come not from OEO but from the U.S. Public Health Service in its administration of the Allied Health Professions Act.

Thus, the disadvantaged may be recognized as the most likely source of health manpower possessing the potential for professional competence. And the broad new avenue out of poverty that has been opened in Southern California may be duplicated throughout the nation.

Meanwhile, the trainees at Pacoima are doggedly following the trail of one of their own. He is a husky young Negro, Chuck Cooper, who traveled far but returned home without job or money. And in the weeks before Casa Loma opened he struggled through classes and long hours in the hospital to become an inhalation therapist. Though not yet fully certified, he earns $700 a month. His certification will enable him to command $1,000 a month almost everywhere in the country. Moreover, he was recently elected president of his union after his hospital entered into a labor contract. The poor in Pacoima know that opportunity isn't made out of jobs and money alone. It means equality and leadership, too.

CAP NEWSLINE Legal Services

Car dealers take poor for ride

Abuses perpetrated on impoverished buyers in the used car market have been spotlighted by a dramatic case in Denver, where the antipoverty Legal Services Project and the local district attorney are jointly pursuing both the criminal and civil sides of poor people's complaints.

The case began with a civil complaint filed by the Legal Aid Society of Denver on behalf of 10 indigent clients against five defendants doing business as an auto sales company. The LSP pleadings asked for $3,111 in actual damages and twice that amount in punitive damages. An injunction against continued deceptive practices by the auto firm was also sought.

The plaintiffs alleged that they had been victimized in an amazing variety of ways. One poor man bought and paid for a car on which he was assured that a warranty would cover repairs for two years. A month later the car broke down. The owner took it to one garage but the dealer spirited it away to another, and refused to let the owner have it until he paid a $217 repair bill.

Another buyer made a $40 down payment on a used car, was subsequently told that financing could not be arranged, was denied title and possession, but was also refused a refund of his $40. Still another poor man lost $200 in the same fashion. One plaintiff traded in his old car for another used car and was later refused credit but the dealer refused to return his old car.

At a hearing on the civil complaint, as indigent purchasers testified one after another about their losses to the auto dealer, the judge of the district court summoned the district attorney and ordered a grand jury probe. Thus, the Legal Services Project and the public prosecutor were launched on cooperative pursuit of a common case. Resultant local publicity brought out more plaintiffs and the civil side of the case grew until it embraced more than a score of indigent clients. At the same time, the grand jury probe was expanded to cover all auto financing and repair activities as well as deceptive sales.

Cox represents the poor

Archibald Cox, former Solicitor General of the U.S. and a Harvard law professor, appeared before the U.S. Supreme Court in October, representing the poor clients of three OEO Legal Services Projects challenging residency laws. At issue are state laws which Cox describes as "vestiges of feudalism" that require the poor to wait for a year before they qualify for welfare after taking up residency in the states. Legal Services Project lawyers won decisions that such residency laws are unconstitutional in Connecticut, Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia. When the states appealed to the highest court in the land, Cox volunteered to argue on behalf of the poor. His appearance marked the second round of arguments before the Supreme Court in those cases. They are the first cases arising in antipoverty Legal Services Projects to be argued before the highest court.

Tenants find aid in Rabbi's court

Unhappy tenants in Boston have discovered a new way of pressing their complaints against landlords—a rabbinical court. The project involving the Rabbinical Court of Justice of the Associated Synagogues of Massachusetts was initiated by the Boston Legal Assistance Project for the South End Tenants Council.

After hearing arguments from both sides—the tenants claimed that the buildings were deteriorating and not maintained properly while the landlords said they were doing their best and the tenants were making the situation worse—the four judges ordered each party to select an arbiter. The two then selected a third member for their panel.

Ultimately a 23-point agreement was worked out which assures the landlords of continued rent payments in return for proper upkeep of the building by the landlords. In addition, the justices created a standard for all landlords in dealing with tenants. The landlord has a responsibility to provide "decent shelter," not only by housing code provisions, but beyond them when the codes are outdated, the panel said. The justices also supported tenant organizations, noting that it was difficult for a single tenant to successfully challenge the landlord on his own.

CAP NEWSLINE Rural

Jobmobiles serve rural poor

Residents of Montgomery and Moore counties in North Carolina don't have to go far to find out about the job situation. A trip to the nearest crossroads will produce the information if a Jobmobile is there. The Jobmobiles are small trucks fitted as offices that regularly visit all parts of the counties with all the services of a regular employment office. Both are sponsored by the Sandhill Community Action Program and the North Carolina Employment Security Commission. Visits to rural locations are made three days a week. Two days are spent talking with employers to get current information.

The Montgomery County unit covers a 488-square mile county where there are 1988 low-income families. A recent survey showed there were 903 unemployed men. In addition to letting people know where the jobs are, the Jobmobile staff provides information about Social Security, the Job Corps and other government programs.

Community Action wins sewer system

It used to look as if the Cleveland Addition had seceded from the town of Fruita, Colorado. Cleveland lacked the paved streets and street lighting that other sections of town had. It didn't even have the natural gas lines common in most neighborhoods.

But in 1965 the Cleveland Addition residents discovered community action and things haven't been the same since.

They quickly learned that many things they had been lacking for years could be had just for the asking. The movement started when John Montgomery, a Public Health Service sanitarian, moved into the almost entirely Mexican-American neighborhood and began to ask why the usual services were lacking.

He found his neighbors had been asking the same questions for a long time, but were reluctant to ask the town council or public utility companies for aid. Montgomery decided to take the first step and approached the public utility company to request gas mains.

"Why sure. When and where do you want them?" was the response. Montgomery, an Anglo, was subsequently elected to the council where he worked to let others know of his area's plight. But he also wanted to involve other residents.

In 1966 he invited six neighbors to meet with officers of the Grand Junction Latin-Anglo Alliance. The Cleveland Addition residents were impressed with what they heard and soon organized the Lower Valley Latin-Anglo Alliance. Mayor Roe Saunders and many businessmen joined.

The first major project was finding a site for a neighborhood service center. The Mesa County Community Action Agency agreed to operate a satellite program if the local group would provide space. The Alliance bought a dilapidated house and everyone pitched in to refurbish it. Alliance members cleaned the house and lot. Unemployed carpenters and plumbers donated their services in exchange for driving expenses and meals on the job. A local merchant gave a furnace to heat the building.

Montgomery resigned from the County Health Department to become coordinator of the center. A neighborhood aide was added to the staff as well as several Neighborhood Youth Corps enrollees.

The center quickly became a focus of employment activity, self-help classes and provided a classroom for a new Head Start program.

Police Chief Dick Walker joined the Alliance and the Neighborhood Council created to operate the center. He helped get road signs and street lights installed in the area. Soon the kids in the community lost their fear of the cops. And the unusually high drop-out rate for that section of town began to decline. But public school students weren't the only Cleveland Addition residents interested in education. Adult education classes were started with an assist from Mesa College. Some residents began to study for high school equivalency certificates.

Things were going very well but the streets remained unpaved and the area lacked sewer lines.

The council planned a new sewer system for the town of Fruita, but ignored the Cleveland Addition because of lack of funds. Determined to be included, a group of the Mexican-American residents formed the Cleveland Addition Sewer Company, paid an agreed-upon assessment and borrowed $4000 of the needed money from the Fruita State Bank. The town donated men and equipment for digging trenches. Youths at the Collbran Job Corps Conservation Center helped in return for their meals during working hours.

The townspeople gradually got their sewer and the youths were introduced to Mexican food. The project cost $6000. Professionally done, the job would have cost nearer $50,000. Residents must pay a $250 fee to have their homes connected to the system, but a time-payment plan has been devised to ease the burden. And poor people in the area only pay half price.

Co-ops need managerial aid

Obtaining competent managerial talent is the most pressing problem facing rural poor people's co-ops.

This was one of the major conclusions drawn at two OEO-sponsored Co-op Month events in October, attended by more than 750 co-op members and friends in Selma, Alabama and Glorieta, New Mexico.

Management "must be able to hire, fire and inspire. Management must make the common man superman—must motivate, inspire and encourage people beyond their capabilities," said Dr. L. Mayland Parker of Arizona State University at the New Mexico meeting.

Across the country in Selma, James Templeton, OEO's Assistant Director for Rural Affairs, told the Alabama group that many poor people's programs had foundered because of a failure to follow "sound managerial practices."

In the New Mexico meeting, resolutions were passed to improve conditions for the fledgling co-ops. They called for the compilation of a directory by the Cooperative League of the U.S.A. that could assist low-income co-ops in finding sources of supply and customers among other co-ops; asked that OEO sponsor similar sessions semi-annually to be planned by the co-ops involved; directed the OEO general counsel to explore the possibility of modifying Farmers Home Administration policy to enable FHA to loan money to production co-ops; suggested the creation of a development bank that could provide long-term low-interest loans to poor people's co-ops, and recommended that agencies already working with low-income cooperatives seek aid from private industry, foundations and churches in providing risk capital for co-ops.

From Apples to Okra

A farmers market in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina, is providing a new source of income for rural people who live at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. They organized a co-op to run the market where they can dispose of surplus produce ranging from apples to okra. Home-made bread is also sold at the market.

The co-op was organized as an affiliate of Blue Ridge Opportunity, the local CAA, after outreach workers realized that many of their constituents had products to sell in small quantities. Some 41 farmers met to organize the co-op and rent an old bus garage as its headquarters.

The City Commissioners turned down their request to waive the $5 vendor's license for fear of setting a precedent, but then donated the needed amount personally. Since then the co-op has grown quickly.

A total of 81 farmers have committed themselves to selling at the market, although a much smaller number ap-

pears on each of the two weekly market days. In the first 12 sale days, $1600 worth of goods was sold.

Previously the items sold at the market were often wasted as the producing family had all it needed. Now the produce creates income and customers were asking for more than the farmers can immediately provide.

CAP NEWSLINE HEAD START

Staffers go to college

Project Head Start has managed another "success story," but this time it features grownups instead of children. Supplementary Training, a new careers program, gives full-year staff members the opportunity of earning college degrees, provides them with more skills which they apply in the class room, and allows them to continue to work full-time. Most importantly, it gives them a future.

Developed under an OEO contract to Educational Projects, Inc., of Washington, D.C., Supplementary Training in its first year has involved more than 200 colleges and universities in 47 states and Puerto Rico, and more than 350 Community Action Agencies and Head Start delegate agencies.

Over 3,500 non-professional and 1,800 professional staff members, while continuing to work in Head Start, have now successfully obtained college credit hours. They are embarked on new careers in child development and are attaining new measures of self-respect.

This training program has achieved a major breakthrough in meeting the very real need for a cadre of experienced, qualified personnel in early childhood education and related areas. It is also achieving institutional change. Participating colleges and universities have adopted more flexible admissions policies and have rearranged the presentation of curricular material so as to make it easier going at first for those persons long out of school and new to college-level course work. Such changes show promise of becoming permanent features in colleges and universities.

At Head Start's insistence, all institutions of higher education involved in the Supplementary Training Program have agreed to: provide retroactive credit to non-high school graduates once they pass the GED or successfully complete a specified number of credit hours; allow transfer of credit from the two-year degree or certificate program to the four-year degree program; offer professional courses first, contrary to the usual practice of offering professional level courses only in the junior and senior years; and offer courses where people are—not just in downtown extension facilities—but right in the Head Start Centers.

Here are some specific examples of other new ideas individual schools are trying out:

—Kansas State Teachers College has designed a specialized curriculum for junior and senior teacher candidates who will teach in poverty areas.

—Marshall University, West Virginia, conducts an experimental program in compressed course/credit offerings which would allow Supplementary Training Program trainees to earn 36 credits within an academic year. Under its plan, instruction offered by the faculty will be supplemented by specially trained Head Start nonprofessionals. Six semester hours credit can be earned in nine weeks under this method.

—Morehead State University, Kentucky, is using a five-person "early childhood" team of faculty specialists in the area of curriculum, nutrition, music, children's literature, and free activities. On Saturdays, the trainees receive general instruction and are free to choose one of the special interest groups also being taught; in this way they can concentrate on developing professional skills in deficiency areas.

If the demonstration is a success, it is reasonable to assume that these changes will become institutional policy. Although none of these changes, taken individually, is exclusive to the Supplementary Training model, it would be hard to find a more comprehensive package of compensatory practices in any other national training effort.

Reports show that the trainees' morale and motivation to pursue new careers within and outside of Head Start as well as job competence have substantially increased as a result of this program. From Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado, one young woman, a non-professional, writes, "I did not desire to continue my education after I graduated from high school. Today, ten years later, I suddenly get a strong thirst for education. Supplementary Training is giving me a boost; it is giving me confidence that I can do college work and that some day I may receive a degree."

Credit rating given D. C. poor

Poor people who lack a good credit rating are now able to charge items in a large Washington department store as part of a new plan worked out by the United Planning Organization, the CAA in D.C.

Under the plan the store will extend credit up to $50 to persons referred by UPO who have attended a short session on how to use credit. Buyers can pay off their bills at a rate of $5 monthly.

UPO predicted the plan would permit poor people "to escape the clutches of gyp merchants." The agency said poor people cannot buy without credit and usually do not have a good enough credit rating to be able to buy at major stores where credit buying is cheaper.

People who successfully participated in the program would then become regular charge customers at the department store, Kann's, and be able to charge larger purchases.

2 million get emergency food

Nearly 2 million poor people in 375 counties throughout the nation are being aided by CAP Emergency Food and Medical Assistance grants. The grants total approximately $13-million.

In counties where food stamp or food distribution programs exist, the funds are used to get all eligible families to participate. In other areas, the money has been used to initiate such programs. Several special programs have been tried in the attempt to alleviate hunger.

In South Carolina, 1000 families were slated to harvest surplus crops donated by eight local truck farms, and can the produce for use later. The self-help plan was arranged by the Beaufort-Jasper CAA.

Residents of Kobuk and Wade-Hampton counties, Alaska, worked to build a low cost rammed-earth building to store food raised in the area. The food was then distributed by village leaders to the areas of greatest need.

CAP NEWSLINE Upward Bound

Integration or not?

"You are here to help me develop a policy and program strategy that will radically increase the college-going rate of Indian youngsters." That was the challenge from the national director of OEO's pre-college Upward Bound program to educators and Indian leaders who met in Phoenix, Arizona, for a two-day conference in mid-October.

"Are all-Indian Upward Bound programs more successful for Indian youngsters than integrated programs?" asked Dr. Thomas A. Billings. Indian leaders responded overwhelmingly in favor of the all-Indian approach. They reasoned that an Indian youth needs the support of a peer group with a common history, to instill self-confidence and develop a healthy aggressiveness, before he is thrown into an integrated, highly competitive college population.

But the conferees recommended that, lest the all-Indian programs become provincial, they be multi-tribal and the students be transferred to integrated programs as soon as their individual personality growth permitted.

Upward Bound currently has two all-Indian projects and 840 Indian students in its 26,000 total student body at almost 300 projects. They represent 39 tribes in addition to non-reservation Indians. Dr. Billings reports that the retention of Indian students is better in all-Indian projects and that the rate of Indian advancement into college has gone up during the three years of the Upward Bound program.

Chicago health center opens

The first Neighborhood Health Center constructed with private funds opened recently in Chicago. The new Martin Luther King Memorial Neighborhood Health Center will serve about 10,000 poor people who have received their medical care at temporary quarters for almost two years. The 120-room building was built on a plot donated by the Sears Roebuck Foundation which also paid more than $500,000 in construction costs.

Driving class helps women

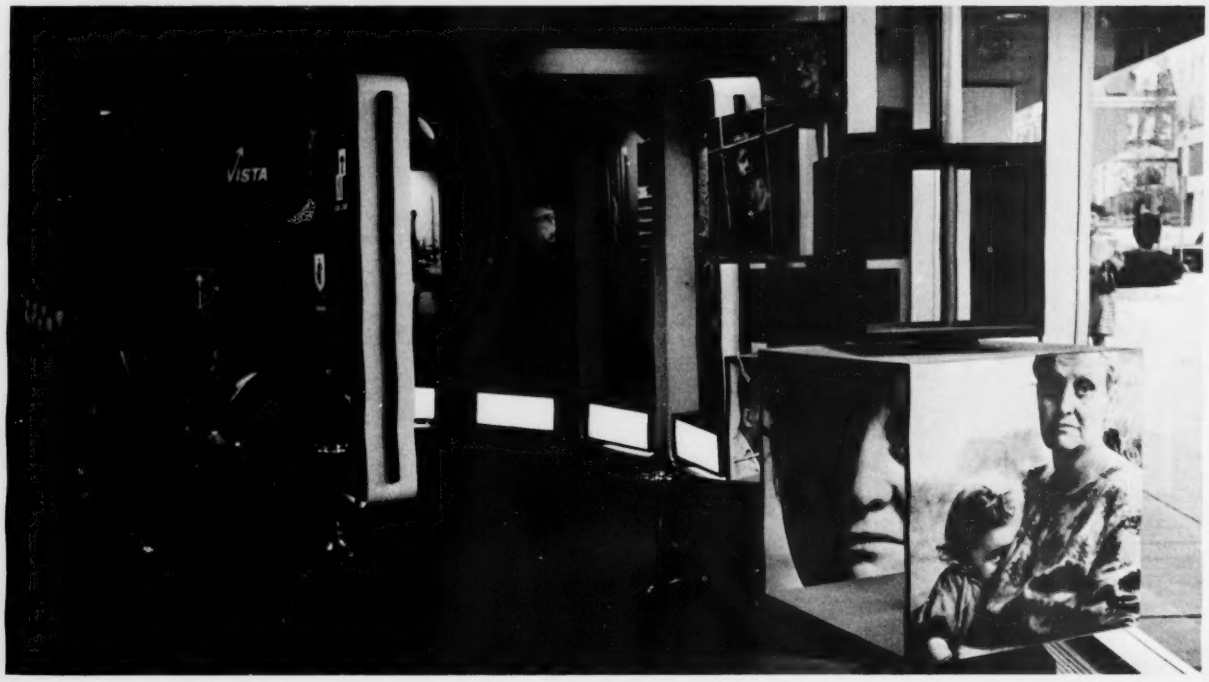
The Platte Valley Action Center of Denver Opportunity has created a new type of head start program—one for women who want to learn how to drive. Running the classes is Rose Garcia, a member of the Platte Valley staff, who prepares women for the written test they must pass before they can receive a temporary drivers license that will allow them to learn to drive.

"Some of them have a hard time figuring out just what the questions mean and what answer is needed. In the class I go right through the instruction book, drawing pictures and diagrams to point out the right way to drive," says Mrs. Garcia. They soon become more confident and their fear of taking the test disappears. Getting a driver's license can improve a woman's economic position, Mrs. Garcia says, enabling her to shop in a wider area to obtain bargain prices outside the neighborhood.

OEO Opens Storefront Data Center

Community Action Agencies have for years used storefronts to reach the people. Located in the neighborhoods, these meeting places are not as formal as offices. People who might hesitate to enter a fancy office will visit a casual storefront.

OEO has now followed the example set by the CAAs. A storefront information center devoted to the causes and cures for poverty opened recently in the lobby of the OEO building in Washington in late October. Displayed are still photos, slide shows and films. Visitors can listen to tapes explaining OEO programs. And information of the most detailed sort is available on microfiche (Want to know what percentage of the Greene County, Ohio, population is poor? Its here.) The next time you're in Washington, drop in.



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